

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tripartite Affiliation to Offer Innovative Mental Health Programs for Youth in the Bay Area

SAN JOSE, California (October 24, 2016) – Three organizations with aligned missions, visions and values have joined forces in a formal affiliation to deliver innovative youth mental health services in the Bay Area: the Bay Area Children’s Association (“BACA”), a non-profit organization of evidence based clinicians with offices in Oakland and San Jose; Shelby’s SafeSpace (“SafeSpace”), a non-profit organization dedicated increasing early access to mental healthcare for young people; and PrairieCare and PrairieCare Medical Group (“PrairieCare”) a Minnesota based leader in psychiatric services at all levels of care.

SafeSpace was conceived by Bay Area residents Stacy Drazan, Susan Bird and Liesl Moldow, whose personal frustration with the current system inspired them to create a new youth driven mental health service. Drazan and Bird, who are the cofounders of SafeSpace, have engaged Chris Tanti to be the organization’s Executive Director. Tanti was previously CEO of the internationally respected and highly regarded *headspace* organization in Australia. The three organizations share a common mission to ensure youth have access to high quality, evidence based mental healthcare across a full spectrum of care, from outpatient counseling to hospital based treatments.

The agreement provides a framework which enables the organizations to work together and expand services beyond BACA’s current Oakland and San Jose sites. “BACA is eager to work with SafeSpace and PrairieCare to build upon what we’ve already accomplished here in the Bay Area,” said BACA Executive Director Tom Tarshis, MD. “What Tom and his team have done here is outstanding and sets the bar for scientifically validated treatments,” added SafeSpace Executive Director, Chris Tanti. “We’re thrilled to partner with BACA and PrairieCare. We are committed to provide mental health care that is revolutionary by contemporary standards because it combines current best practices from around the world and is based on extensive input from youth.”

PrairieCare CEO Joel Oberstar, MD noted, “We’ve collaborated with Dr. Tarshis for nearly seven years now and have tremendous respect for what he and BACA have accomplished in that time. The SafeSpace team is passionate about transforming the current system of care. We are eager to bring our knowledge and expertise to bear in expanding access to care in the Bay Area.” Gianna DiBono, a high school senior residing in Menlo Park, added “It is an ongoing problem that, not only does the Bay Area have a lack of programs for mental health, youth-oriented services are particularly lacking. We need programs that meet the needs of youth experiencing mild issues all the way through serious ones.”

The organizations are currently engaged in coordinated strategic planning to identify next steps for the Affiliation. They are seeking comment/feedback from key stakeholders and the general public regarding particular areas of need. Comments may be submitted via email to feedback@baca.org.

About the Organizations

BACA

The Bay Area Children’s Association is a non-profit agency whose mission is to set a new standard in providing care for children with mental illnesses and their families. All clinicians share the vision of using the best-known, evidence-based practices to resolve mental health symptoms. Its physicians like being in an environment where they get to deliver psychotherapy services and not just write prescriptions all day. BACA therapists enjoy being in a collaborative, integrated clinic setting. BACA was formed in

2007 and since then has provided high quality care to thousands of youth and family members. For more information, please visit www.BACA.org.

Shelby's SafeSpace

SafeSpace is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping young people get early access to mental healthcare. Based on a model developed and proven in Australia, SafeSpace aims to provide a friendly place for youth and young adults to go—either online or in person—to get confidential help from someone who will listen to and not judge them. SafeSpace was formed in 2016 by Bay Area residents Stacy Drazan and Susan Bird; Chris Tanti serves as the organization's Executive Director. For more information, please visit www.SafeSpace.org.

PrairieCare and PrairieCare Medical Group

PrairieCare is a physician-owned and led freestanding psychiatric healthcare system based in the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan area of Minnesota. Formed in 2009 as the Minnesota outreach efforts of a North Dakota system, PrairieCare has grown to eight sites across Minnesota providing the full continuum of care to youth and their families, from outpatient clinic services to inpatient care. Comprised of 32 psychiatrists and over one hundred independently licensed psychotherapists, PrairieCare provides care to thousands of patients and their families each year. For more information, please visit www.Prairie-Care.com.

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